



State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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September 4, 2003

Mr. Kerry Nielsen
Corporation of the Presiding Bishop
Joseph Smith Memorial Building, Floor 8
15 East South Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-6330

Subject: Revegetation Success and Need to Continue Payment of Permit Fees, Corporation of the Presiding Bishop, Little Cottonwood Granite Quarry, S/035/017, Salt Lake County, Utah

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

I inspected the Little Cottonwood Canyon Granite Quarry on August 6, 2003, for the purpose of determining how much the vegetation has become established and to see to what degree the area has been affected by hikers and rock climbers. The enclosed inspection report discusses my findings. You had asked the Division to evaluate the site and to determine whether it is necessary for you to pay the permit fees for 2003-2004.

Minerals Program Rule R647-3-109 states:

Revegetation shall be considered accomplished when:

13.11. The revegetation has achieved 70 percent of the premining vegetative ground cover. If the premining vegetative ground cover of the disturbed area is unknown, then the ground cover of an adjacent undisturbed area that is representative of the premining conditions will be used as a standard. Also, the vegetation has survived three growing seasons following the last seeding, fertilization or irrigation, unless such practices are to continue as part of the postmining land use; or

Please note the requirement that "... the vegetation has survived three growing seasons following the last seeding, fertilization or irrigation ...". According to our records, you planted 300 transplants and 30 pounds of seed in 2001 because the amount of vegetation cover from desirable species was less than 10 percent. This is a significant revegetation effort considering the size of the site. While this effort has resulted in greatly increased vegetation cover, we

Kerry Nielsen
Page 2 of 3
S/035/017
September 4, 2003

believe it is reasonable and necessary to wait three years after the last seeding (2004) before we can consider releasing the site. Therefore, you are still required to pay the \$150 permit fee for 2003-2004.

The Division does allow some flexibility in this rule if only a small portion of a site needs to be reseeded. In the case of the Little Cottonwood Quarry, vegetation in much of the site is progressing well and does not need remedial action, but there are some areas toward the bottom of the site where we believe it would be beneficial to hand broadcast some additional seed and to use a rake to cover it shallowly. I would be glad to show you these areas. They are small enough that it would not be necessary to restart the time period for the site to be released. Rather than using the complete seed mix that you used in 2001, I recommend that you plant a few of the grass species, such as bluebunch wheatgrass, big bluegrass, and slender wheatgrass. A few pounds of each of these should be sufficient.

In our letter to you dated August 7, 2001, we indicated we had estimated vegetation cover in adjacent areas as being 50 percent which would make the revegetation success standard 70 percent of this value or 35 percent vegetation cover. As discussed in the enclosed inspection report, I found the vegetation cover from perennial species in the reclaimed area to be 21.1 percent. I am hopeful that the additional seeding recommended above will result in the additional cover needed to achieve the revegetation standard, but we will need to reevaluate the site next summer.

On August 28, 2003, I spoke with Greg Baptist of Salt Lake County about these recommendations. He visited the site last spring and felt the trees and shrubs were growing reasonably well, especially considering the drought conditions. He agreed that we should take another look at the site next year.

You have previously expressed concern about areas being used by recreationists and about how this would affect release of the site. As far as I could tell, it appears damage from rock climbers and hikers is basically confined to the parking area at the base of the site and to a trail leading up through the site, although I think there are some who stray from the trail. I did not include these areas in my vegetation cover measurements because, although you have not authorized these activities, they are, nevertheless, a postmining land use. While these areas are still part of your disturbed area, requiring revegetation on a trail or in a parking area is not logical or practical.

I hope this letter answers your questions and allays some of your fears about what the Division will require. While we are asking you to pay the permit fee for another year, I anticipate the site will meet release criteria next year, especially with some supplemental seeding. Please

Kerry Nielsen
Page 3 of 3
S/035/017
September 4, 2003

call me at 801-538-5261, if you have additional questions. Thank you for your patience and continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PBB', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul B. Baker, Senior Reclamation Biologist
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining

PBB:jb
Enclosure: Inspection Report
cc: Greg Baptist, Salt Lake County
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